

To the most Honorable Assembly of the Commons
in the house of Parliament.

The Binders of bookes in London, doe most humbly shew,



That whereas *George Withers* Gent. lately composed a book, which he calleth, *The Songs or Hymnes of the Church*, and hath obtained Letters patents from his Maiestie for the sole printing thereof for fifty one yeares: in which Grant a speciall clause is contained, as he reports, that no Psalme-booke whatsoever shall hereafter be bound and sold, vnlesse the said *Songs and Hymnes* of the forenamed *George Withers* be annexed & bound vp therein or therewith, vpon paine of forfeiture of the said bookes, and forty shillings for euery booke bound vp contrary to the intent of his said Patent.

Now may it please this Honorable Assembly to take into their consideration these following Obiections, which we poore workmen, to the number of fourescore and vppward, shall declare, and intimate against the said *George Withers* or his Substitutes.

First, whether it be fitting to vse these Songs or Hymnes to be sung as Psalmes in the Church.

Secondly, whether it will be an imposition or Monopoly laid vpon the subiects, that euery one that will buy a Bible, Testament, or Seruice booke, or Psalme booke, must and shall be inforced to buy one of his, which will raise the price of euery Psalme booke folde formerly, from five pence to eight pence, and euery Psalme booke of six pence to ten pence, and so in the feuerall proportion of rates, according to the greatnesse of the booke: but in these named, your poore petitioners do not intermeddle at all.

We onely raise our complaint vpon the abuses and inconueniences of our owne trade, which doe and must daily follow, and of which we can shew, declare and make manifest prooffe, that in some volumes, namely the Communion book with Testament and Psalmes in *octavo*, the Communion book with Psalmes in *decimo sexto*, the Communion booke and Testament with Psalmes in *24*, and other volumes.

1. The said Songs cannot be incerted, or ioyned, or put to, to be any way seruiceable or fitting, to the vse of the buyer, by reason the bookes will rise to a greater bulke, and swell with once or twice opening beyond the expectation of the owner, do the workman what he can, either by beating or pressing, and so euery such booke will quickly be made vnseruiceable, and such manner of binding hurtfull to all others.

2. Secondly, the Book-sellers being our work-masters, and knowing that but few of his Maiesties subiects will willingly buy the said Songs or Hymnes, will not send the said Songs to be bound with the said bookes; and then if we bind them without, they are seized vpon, as forfeited to the said *George Withers* or his Substitutes, whereby your poore Petitioners are greatly hindered, and in danger to be vndone.

3. Thirdly, that since the said *George Withers* hath had his Patent, he hath come vpon the poore workmen, and seized the Book-sellers bookes, refraining to go to the book-sellers themselves, whereby they desist from setting the poore workmen on worke, as in times past, vnlesse the workmen will warrant their bookes.

4. Fourthly, that since the time of his constraint to bind bookes in this manner, the Book-sellers now take a course to send away their bookes in quiers into the countrey; and so we, which in times past were vsed to binde vp their bookes in London, are not set on worke, as we were wont to be, to the great prejudice of our selues, our wiues and children, being likely to be vndone for want of employment: besides the damage ariseth to the buyer: for in the countrey they haue not the art and skill, as we haue, nor the good order to ouersee the worke, whether it be artificially and lawfully done, or not; for they binde most of their books in sheeps leather and other bad leather and stuffe, whereby they be vnseruiceable, and vnfit to be allowed.

5. Fiftly, by this meanes of carying our trade into the countrey, many of the poorer sort of Binders, iournymen and apprentices go down to worke in the countries, and fall vpon Popish and offensive books, to the great prejudice and vexation of the whole kingdome.

The premises considered, we most humbly pray, that this honorable Assembly will take order, that the Petitioners be not hindred or interrupted in their trade, and compelled to binde the said bookes together: but as it is lawfull for any man to haue the Bible, Testament, Communion booke, or Psalmes alone, or any part of them bound vp as he shall thinke fitting; so the Petitioners may be left at libertie, as heretofore they haue been, to binde vp bookes as euery man desires them for his owne proper vse, and no otherwise. And they shall dayly pray, &c.